



Discovery House, Phillip ACT 2606
PO Box 200, Woden ACT 2606
Australia
Phone + 61 -2 6283 2211
Facsimile +61 -2 6285 3593
Internet <http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au>

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SPRUSON & FERGUSON
GPO Box 3898
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Your Ref : 477293 LDP

Examiner's first report on patent application no. 53527/99
by CANON KABUSHIKI KAISHA

OOI 100 1000

Last proposed amendment no

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am replying to the request for normal examination. I have examined the application and I believe that there are lawful grounds of objection to the application. These grounds of objection are:

There is no Notice of Entitlement on file.

1. The claims do not clearly define the invention.

From an overall reading of the specification (especially page 2 lines 4 - 24) it appears to be essential that the electronic card interface system includes means enabling a user to customise control data stored in or accessed by the electronic card, whereby the customised control data determines a service of a communications network or communications apparatus that the user may access.

However claim 1 for instance does not clearly distinguish the "equipment" (line 13) from the electronic card writer or user terminal. In this respect it appears to be essential that the equipment be an external communications apparatus or network. Claims 15 and 45 are silent in respect to enabling the user to customise control data, which data then controls a function of the data controlled equipment or network service. At present claim 15 defines the control of this equipment by the receipt of data rather than by the data itself. Claims 16 to 44 are wholly silent in respect to the above apparently essential features of the invention.

2. Pursuant to item 1 the application is for more than one invention.

Claims 1 - 15 and 45 define equipment control in an electronic card interface system. Claims 16 and 17 define transparency and opacity characteristics of parts of an electronic card reader. Claim 18 defines an electronic card indexing apparatus. Claims 19 - 44 define touch sensitive control features on an electronic card.

There is no single unifying inventive concept defined in the present claims.

3 The invention as defined in claims 15 and 45 is not novel in the light of:-

EP 400221 by Philips NV, published 5 December 1990, and
EP 606287 by Thomson Consumer Electronics, published 20 July 1994.

These citations individually disclose all the essential features of claims 15 and 45

4 The invention as defined in claims 19 to 45 is not novel in the light of WO96/32702 by Smart TV Co., published 17 October 1996. This citation discloses touch sensitive control in the form of buttons 30, 32, 92 and 94 on a smart card together with means for interfacing the card with a remote service for controlling functions provided by that service.

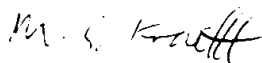
Further opinion on the novelty and inventive step of claims 16 to 44 is reserved pending resolution of item 2.

5 Claim 34 is not clear as it is appended to a later claim 35.

I apologise for your application not being considered within the time set out in our Customer Service Charter. We are refining our processes to address these delays.

You have 21 months from the date of this report to overcome all my objection(s) otherwise your application will lapse. You will need to pay a fee for any response you file after 12 months from the date of this report before I can consider that response.

Yours faithfully,



M.G. KRAEFFT
Supervising Examiner of Patents, Section C4
Telephone: (02) 6283 2455